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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KIRF](#) [PREF](#) [VM](#)
SUBJECT: DO NAM HAI: LAST OF THE 8406 BLOC DISSIDENTS?

REF: HCMC 206; B) HCMC 1361 AND PREVIOUS

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11. Summary: Do Nam Hai, co-founder of the dissident 8406 Bloc (which calls for peaceful political change in Vietnam), told us that he has been under de facto house arrest since about the time police intensified their actions against 8406 co-leader Father Nguyen Van Ly in Hue. Hai has no intention of leaving Vietnam despite police hints that he should do so or face arrest. Separately, Nguyen Chinh Ket, an 8406 member now visiting Norway, told us that he plans to return to Vietnam this summer after touring the United States and Europe to promote human rights. Ket confirmed Internet reports that the police have issued a warrant for his arrest. Like Hai, Ket is prepared to face prosecution. GVN authorities are closely monitoring the activities of the dissidents inside Vietnam and overseas. Anti-terrorism police complained to HCMC RSO that the Consulate continues to associate with "terrorists." End Summary.

The Last "Free" 8406 Bloc Member in Vietnam

12. (SBU) Following police action to confine co-founder of the "8406 Bloc" Father Nguyen Dan Ly in Hue and the arrest of lawyer Nguyen Van Dai in Hanoi, we checked up on the author of the 8406 Bloc democracy manifesto, HCMC-based Do Nam Hai. (The 8406 Bloc was founded in April 2006 by Ly and Hai. The Bloc and associated organizations such as the "Alliance for Democracy," brought together dissidents throughout Vietnam under a platform calling for elimination of one-party rule in Vietnam.) Hai reports that the level of police surveillance against him has increased considerably over the past month placing him under de facto house arrest. Four to six policemen are routinely stationed around his home. When he leaves his house, he often is picked up by police, who hold him all day and question him on the cases of 8406 Bloc and other activists that have been arrested in HCMC. Hai said that he refuses to answer any police questions during these interrogation sessions. On March 9, a police colonel came to his house and told him that he will face "strong measures like in Hue and Hanoi" if he does not cease his 8406 activities.

13. (SBU) Hai said that police also questioned him about whether he wished to leave Vietnam. Hai said that he told police that he is a loyal Vietnamese citizen and has no intention to leave despite the threat of prosecution. Hai noted that he last spoke with Father Ly over the phone immediately before the Lunar New Year holiday in late February. He would not discuss the content of that

conversation over the phone.

One on the Outside

14. (SBU) Hai said that he could not confirm, but did not doubt the authenticity of overseas Vietnamese website reports that police have issued an arrest warrant for 8406 Bloc member Nguyen Chinh Ket. In December 2006, Ket was issued a visa to travel to the United States to receive a human rights award from a California-based group. (Following MPS efforts to block Ket from applying for a routine visa, ConGen facilitated an interview and visa through Post's visa referral system.) Ket reported that police also sought to prevent him from departing Vietnam. We understand that Ket eventually snuck out of the country overland.

15. (SBU) On March 9, Nguyen Chinh Ket reported to us via email that he departed the United States on March 3 and now is in Norway. Ket said he will meet with representatives of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, Norway's Labor and Conservative Parties, the Nobel Institute and the Nobel Peace Center, the Mayor of Oslo, the Rafto Foundation and the Norwegian MFA. Ket stated that he will hold similar meetings in Belgium, Germany, France, Denmark, Canada, and Australia. He confirmed that, on March 5, police delivered an arrest warrant for four months investigative detention to his home. Nonetheless, he intends to return to Vietnam in June after his international trip.

HCMC Police: "They Are Terrorists"

16. (SBU) In a March 6 meeting, HCMC anti-terrorist police raised the case of Ket and another 8406 Bloc activist, Tran Quoc Hien, with HCMC RSO. The police said that on February 13, Ministry of Public Security (MPS) "contacts" reported

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that Hien conducted prohibited activities during APEC and had a plan to "target the President Bush visit." The anti-terrorist police said that Hien was charged with disturbing social security in accordance with Article 89, Vietnamese Criminal Code (which governs illegal migration in and out of Vietnam). (Note: During the visit of President Bush to HCMC, police prevented dissidents from contacting the international press pool covering the visit. End Note.)

17. (SBU) The anti-terrorist police called Nguyen Chinh Ket "an accomplice" of Hien. They reported that on December 6, Ket left Vietnam "illegally" for Cambodia and entered the U.S. on December 20. The MPS officials complained that ConGen issued a visa for Ket "without an interview." They expressed concern that Ket now had more opportunities to carry out prohibited activities against the Vietnamese government in the United States. They requested an explanation as to how and why Ket received a visa.

18. (SBU) The anti-terrorism officials also told RSO that the MPS has information that Hien and Ket "are supported by a number of politicians in the United States, who do not have appropriate information about these two individuals." They requested that "in the spirit of enhancing our cooperative relationship," ConGen ask U.S. politicians not to support "terrorist activities against the Vietnamese government." They also asserted that ConGen coordinate with the anti-terrorism office in dealing with dissidents. RSO stressed that we do not consider peaceful speech to be terrorism and added that, unless and until MPS provides evidence to the contrary, all our available information indicates that Ket, Hien and other political dissidents are only exercising free speech.

19. (SBU) Comment: Do Nam Hai is the intellectual backbone

of the 8406 Bloc. He is the last unincarcerated Bloc member in Vietnam (see complete list of dissidents under detention in HCMC Consular District below), although he clearly is feeling the heat. The level of detail that the MPS provided RSO about Ket's movements -- including knowledge of his correct date of entry into the United States -- demonstrates how carefully the GVN tracks and pursues political dissidents, even overseas. End Comment.

¶10. (SBU) List of democracy activists in HCMC Consular District reportedly under arrest, detention (based on information available as of March 8, 2006):

8406 Bloc

Nguyen Van Ly: under strict house arrest outside Hue as of February 24. Prosecution pending.

Nguyen Ngoc Quang: Quang detained in Hue after meeting with Father Ly on September 2, 2006.

Vu Hoang Hai: Arrested in HCMC on September 5, 2006.

Pham Ba Hai: Arrested in Thai Binh province in early September. Reportedly transferred back to HCMC.

Truong Quoc Huy: Arrested August 18 at an Internet caf, in HCMC while listening on the PalTalk internet forum.

Tran Quoc Hien: Arrested January 12, 2007 in HCMC. Also "spokesman" of the United Workers/Farmers Organization of Vietnam.

Democratic Party of Vietnam

Bui Kim Thanh: Involuntarily committed to the Dong Nai mental institution since November 2, 2006.

People's Democratic Party of Vietnam (PDP-VN)

Le Trung Hieu: Arrested in An Giang province, date unknown.

Huynh Nguyen Dao: aka Huynh Viet Lang, arrested August 15, 2006

Le Nguyen Sang: aka Nguyen Hoang Long, arrested on August 14, 2006. Charged with "storage of anti-government materials."

Workers/Farmers Union (affiliated with the PDP-VN)

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Nguyen Tuan: Arrested in HCMC November 18, 2006.

Hoang Huy Chuong: aka Doan Huy Chuong, detained in Tan Phu district, HCMC on November 14.

Doan Van Dien: Father of Hoang Huy Chuong. Dien also was arrested on November 14 in Dong Nai province. Charged with "propagandizing against the government."

Nguyen Tan Hoanh: Arrested in Dong Nai province on November 15, 2006.

Tran Thi Le Hang: Arrested in Dong Nai province on November 15, 2006.

Le Van Sy: Arrested November 15, 2006.

Nguyen Thi Tuyet: Arrested in HCMC November 15, 2006.

Le Ba Triet: Arrested in HCMC November 18, 2006.
WINNICK